

Nuclear Regulatory Commission

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§ 12.304 Comments by other parties.

Any party to a proceeding other than the applicant and the NRC counsel may file comments on an application within 30 days after it is served, or on an answer within 15 days after it is served. A commenting party may not participate further in proceedings on the application unless the adjudicative officer determines that the public interest requires participation in order to permit full exploration of matters raised in the comments.

§ 12.305 Settlement.

The applicant and the NRC counsel may agree on a proposed settlement of the award before final action on the application, either in connection with a settlement of the underlying proceeding, or after the underlying proceeding has been concluded, in accordance with the NRC's standard settlement procedure. If a prevailing party and the NRC's counsel agree on a proposed settlement of an award before an application has been filed, the application shall be filed with the proposed settlement.

§ 12.306 Further proceedings.

(a) Ordinarily, the determination of an award will be made on the basis of the written record. However, on request of either the applicant or the NRC counsel, or on the adjudicative officer's own initiative, the adjudicative officer may order further proceedings, such as an informal conference, oral argument, additional written submissions or, as to issues other than substantial justification (such as the applicant's eligibility or substantiation of fees and expenses), pertinent discovery or an evidentiary hearing. Further proceedings shall be held only when necessary for full and fair resolution of the issues arising from the application, and shall be conducted as promptly as possible. Whether or not the position of the agency was substantially justified shall be determined on the basis of the administrative record, as a whole, which is made in the adversary adjudication for which fees and other expenses are sought.

(b) A request that the adjudicative officer order further proceedings under this section shall specifically identify

the information sought or the disputed issues and shall explain why the additional proceedings are necessary to resolve the issues.

§ 12.307 Decision.

(a) The adjudicative officer shall issue an initial decision on the application within 90 days after completion of proceedings on the application. If the adjudicative officer fails to issue an initial decision within 90 days, he or she shall notify the parties of the reason for the delay and shall set a new deadline.

(b) The initial decision shall include written findings and conclusions on the applicant's eligibility and status as a prevailing party, and an explanation of the reasons for any difference between the amount requested and the amount awarded. The decision shall also include, if at issue, findings on whether the NRC's position was substantially justified, whether the applicant unduly protracted the proceedings, or whether special circumstances make an award unjust. If the applicant has sought an award against more than one agency, the decision shall allocate responsibility for payment of any award made among the agencies, and shall explain the reasons for the allocation made.

§ 12.308 Agency review.

(a) Either the applicant or the NRC counsel may seek review of the initial decision on the fee application, or the Commission may decide to review the decision on its own initiative, in accordance with the Commission's review procedures set out in 10 CFR 2.341. The filing of a petition for review is mandatory for a party to exhaust its administrative remedies before seeking judicial review. If neither the applicant nor NRC counsel seeks review and the Commission does not take review on its own initiative, the initial decision on the application shall become a final decision of the NRC 120 days after it is issued.

(b) Notwithstanding anything to the contrary in any other part of the Commission's regulations, the initial decision shall be inoperative (*i.e.*, the decision shall not be final and any award made shall not be paid) until the later of—

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(1) The expiration of the 120 day period provided in paragraph (a) of this section; or

(2) If within the 120 day period provided in paragraph (a) of this section the Commission elects to review the decision, the Commission's issuance of a final decision on review of the initial decision.

(c) Whether to review a decision on its own motion is a matter within the discretion of the Commission. If review is taken, the Commission will issue a final decision on the application or remand the application to the adjudicative officer for further proceedings.

[59 FR 23121, May 5, 1994, as amended at 77 FR 46599, Aug. 3, 2012]

§ 12.309 Judicial review.

Judicial review of final agency decisions on awards may be sought as provided in 5 U.S.C. 504(c)(2).

§ 12.310 Payment of award.

An applicant seeking payment of an award shall submit to the appropriate official of the paying agency a copy of the Commission's final decision granting the award, accompanied by a certification that the applicant will not seek review of the decision in the United States courts. Where the award is granted against the Commission, the applicant shall make the submission to the Director, Division of Accounting and Finance, Office of the Controller, U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission, Washington, DC 20555. The NRC will pay the amount awarded to the applicant within 60 days.

PART 13—PROGRAM FRAUD CIVIL REMEDIES

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AUTHORITY: 31 U.S.C. 3801 through 3812; 44 U.S.C. 3504 note.

Section 13.13 also issued under Sec. 31001(s), Pub. L. 104–134, 110 Stat. 1321–373 (28 U.S.C. 2461 note); 31 U.S.C. 3730.

SOURCE: 56 FR 47135, Sept. 18, 1991, unless otherwise noted.

§ 13.1 Basis and purpose.

(a) *Basis.* This part implements the Program Fraud Civil Remedies Act of 1986, Public Law No. 99–509, §§ 6101–6104, 100 Stat. 1874 (October 21, 1986) (31 U.S.C. 3801–3812). 31 U.S.C. 3809 requires each authority head to promulgate regulations necessary to implement the provisions of that Act.

(b) *Purpose.* This part (1) establishes administrative procedures for imposing civil penalties and assessments against persons who make, submit, or present, or cause to be made, submitted, or presented, false, fictitious, or fraudulent